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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

MIGUEL HERNANDEZ,
Plaintiff,

vs.

WOODMAN SQUARE PROPERTIES,
LLC; and DOES 1 to 10,
Defendants.

Case No.:

COMPLAINT FOR INJUNCTIVE
RELIEF AND DAMAGES FOR DENIAL
OF CIVIL RIGHTS OF A DISABLED
PERSON IN VIOLATIONS OF

1. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES
ACT, 42 U.S.C. §12131 et seq.;

2. CALIFORNIA'S UNRUH CIVIL
RIGHTS ACT;

3. CALIFORNIA'S DISABLED
PERSONS ACT;

4. CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY
CODE;

5. NEGLIGENCE

Plaintiff MIGUEL HERNANDEZ ("Plaintiff") complains of Defendants
WOODMAN SQUARE PROPERTIES, LLC; and DOES 1 to 10 ("Defendants") and
alleges as follows:

PARTIES

1. Plaintiff is a California resident with a physical disability. Plaintiff suffers
from paraplegia, chronic pain with hypertension secondary to the injury and lumbar

1 strain, and is substantially limited in his ability to walk. Plaintiff requires the use of a
2 wheelchair at all times when traveling in public.

3 2. Defendants are, or were at the time of the incident, the real property owners,
4 business operators, lessors and/or lessees of the real property for a restaurant
5 (“Business”) located at or about 4344 Woodman Ave., Sherman Oaks CA, California.

6 3. The true names and capacities, whether individual, corporate, associate or
7 otherwise of Defendant DOES 1 through 10, and each of them, are unknown to Plaintiff,
8 who therefore sues said Defendants by such fictitious names. Plaintiff will ask leave of
9 Court to amend this Complaint when the true names and capacities have been
10 ascertained. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and, based thereon, alleges that each such
11 fictitiously named Defendants are responsible in some manner, and therefore, liable to
12 Plaintiff for the acts herein alleged.

13 4. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges that, at all relevant
14 times, each of the Defendants was the agent, employee, or alter-ego of each of the other
15 Defendants, and/or was acting in concert with each of the other Defendants, and in doing
16 the things alleged herein was acting with the knowledge and consent of the other
17 Defendants and within the course and scope of such agency or employment relationship.

18 5. Whenever and wherever reference is made in this Complaint to any act or
19 failure to act by a defendant or Defendants, such allegations and references shall also be
20 deemed to mean the acts and failures to act of each Defendant acting individually, jointly
21 and severally.

22 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

23 6. The Court has jurisdiction of this action pursuant to 28 USC §§ 1331 and
24 1343 for violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, (42 USC §12101, *et*
25 *seq.*).

26 7. Pursuant to pendant jurisdiction, attendant and related causes of action,
27 arising from the same nucleus of operating facts, are also brought under California law,
28

1 including, but not limited to, violations of California Civil Code §§51, 51.5, 52(a), 52.1,
2 54, 54., 54.3 and 55.

3 8. Plaintiff's claims are authorized by 28 USC §§ 2201 and 2202.

4 9. Venue is proper in this court pursuant to 28 USC §1391(b). The real
5 property which is the subject of this action is located in this district, Los Angeles County,
6 California, and that all actions complained of herein take place in this district.

7 **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

8 10. In or about January of 2024, Plaintiff went to the Business.

9 11. The Business is a restaurant business establishment, open to the public, and
10 is a place of public accommodation that affects commerce through its operation.
11 Defendants provide parking spaces for customers.

12 12. While attempting to enter the Business during each visit, Plaintiff personally
13 encountered a number of barriers that interfered with his ability to use and enjoy the
14 goods, services, privileges, and accommodations offered at the Business.

15 13. To the extent of Plaintiff's personal knowledge, the barriers at the Business
16 included, but were not limited to, the following:

- 17 a. Defendants failed to comply with the federal and state standards for
18 the parking space designated for persons with disabilities. Defendants
19 failed to post required signage such as, "Minimum Fine \$250" and
20 "Unauthorized Parking."
21 b. Defendants failed to comply with the federal and state standards for
22 the parking space designated for persons with disabilities. Defendants
23 failed to provide a proper accessible route as required, as both a large
24 planter and a permanently installed bollard obstruct the access route,
25 severely limiting passage.
26 c. Defendants failed to maintain the parking space designated for
27 persons with disabilities to comply with the federal and state
28

standards. Defendants failed to provide an adequate number of accessible parking spaces designated for the persons with disabilities.

14. These barriers and conditions denied Plaintiff full and equal access to the Business and caused Plaintiff difficulty and frustration. Plaintiff wishes to return and patronize the Business; however, Plaintiff is deterred from visiting the Business because his knowledge of these violations prevents him from returning until the barriers are removed.

15. Based on the violations, Plaintiff alleges, on information and belief, that there are additional barriers to accessibility at the Business after further site inspection. Plaintiff seeks to have all barriers related to his disability remedied. *See Doran v. 7-Eleven, Inc.* 524 F.3d 1034 (9th Cir. 2008).

16. In addition, Plaintiff alleges, on information and belief, that Defendants knew that particular barriers render the Business inaccessible, violate state and federal law, and interfere with access for the physically disabled.

17. At all relevant times, Defendants had and still have control and dominion over the conditions at this location and had and still have the financial resources to remove these barriers without much difficulty or expenses to make the Business accessible to the physically disabled in compliance with ADDAG and Title 24 regulations. Defendants have not removed such barriers and have not modified the Business to conform to accessibility regulations.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

VIOLATION OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

18. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior paragraphs in this complaint.

19. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”), no individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of

1 public accommodation by any person who owns, leases, or leases to, or operates a place
2 of public accommodation. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 12182(a).

3 20. Discrimination, *inter alia*, includes:

- 4 a. A failure to make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or
5 procedures, when such modifications are necessary to afford such
6 goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations
7 to individuals with disabilities, unless the entity can demonstrate that
8 making such modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of
9 such goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or
10 accommodations. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(ii).
- 11 b. A failure to take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that no
12 individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated or
13 otherwise treated differently than other individuals because of the
14 absence of auxiliary aids and services, unless the entity can
15 demonstrate that taking such steps would fundamentally alter the
16 nature of the good, service, facility, privilege, advantage, or
17 accommodation being offered or would result in an undue burden. 42
18 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(iii).
- 19 c. A failure to remove architectural barriers, and communication barriers
20 that are structural in nature, in existing facilities, and transportation
21 barriers in existing vehicles and rail passenger cars used by an
22 establishment for transporting individuals (not including barriers that
23 can only be removed through the retrofitting of vehicles or rail
24 passenger cars by the installation of a hydraulic or other lift), where
25 such removal is readily achievable. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(iv).
- 26 d. A failure to make alterations in such a manner that, to the maximum
27 extent feasible, the altered portions of the facility are readily
28 accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including

1 individuals who use wheelchairs or to ensure that, to the maximum
2 extent feasible, the path of travel to the altered area and the
3 bathrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving the altered
4 area, are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with
5 disabilities where such alterations to the path or travel or the
6 bathrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving the altered area
7 are not disproportionate to the overall alterations in terms of cost and
8 scope. 42 U.S.C. § 12183(a)(2).

9 21. Where parking spaces are provided, accessible parking spaces shall be
10 provided. 1991 ADA Standards § 4.1.2(5); 2010 ADA Standards § 208. One in every
11 eight accessible spaces, but not less than one, shall be served by an access aisle 96 in
12 (2440 mm) wide minimum and shall be designated “van accessible.” 1991 ADA
13 Standards § 4.1.2(5)(b). For every six or fraction of six parking spaces, at least one shall
14 be a van accessible parking space. 2010 ADA Standards § 208.2.4.

15 22. Under the ADA, the method and color of marking are to be addressed by
16 State or local laws or regulations. See 36 C.F.R., Part 1191. Under the California
17 Building Code (“CBC”), the parking space identification signs shall include the
18 International Symbol of Accessibility. Parking identification signs shall be reflectorized
19 with a minimum area of 70 square inches. Additional language or an additional sign
20 below the International Symbol of Accessibility shall state “Minimum Fine \$250.” A
21 parking space identification sign shall be permanently posted immediately adjacent and
22 visible from each parking space, shall be located with its centerline a maximum of 12
23 inches from the centerline of the parking space and may be posted on a wall at the
24 interior end of the parking space. See CBC § 11B-502.6, et seq.

25 23. Moreover, an additional sign shall be posted either in a conspicuous place at
26 each entrance to an off-street parking facility or immediately adjacent to on-site
27 accessible parking and visible from each parking space. The additional sign shall not be
28 less than 17 inches wide by 22 inches high. The additional sign shall clearly state in

1 letters with a minimum height of 1 inch the following: “Unauthorized vehicles parked in
2 designated accessible spaces not displaying distinguishing placards or special license
3 plates issued for persons with disabilities will be towed away at the owner’s expense...”
4 See CBC § 11B-502.8, et seq.

5 24. Here, Defendants failed to provide the sign stating, “Minimum Fine \$250”
6 and the additional sign with the specific language stating “Unauthorized vehicles parked
7 in designated accessible spaces not displaying distinguishing placards or special license
8 plates issued for persons with disabilities will be towed away at the owner’s expense...”

9 25. At least one accessible route shall connect accessible building, facilities,
10 elements, and spaces that are on the same site. 1991 ADA Standards § 4.3.2. A public
11 accommodation shall maintain in operable working condition those features of facilities
12 and equipment that are required to be readily accessible to and usable by persons with
13 disabilities by the Act or this part. 28 C.F.R. 35.211(a).

14 26. Here, Defendants failed to provide at least one accessible route to the
15 Business as both a large planter and a permanently installed bollard obstruct the access
16 route, severely limiting passage.

17 27. Parking spaces complying with 502 shall be provided in accordance with
18 Table 208.2 except as required by 208.2.1, 208.2.2, and 208.2.2.3. 2010 ADA Standards
19 § 208.2. Where more than one parking facility is provided on a site, the number of
20 accessible spaces provided on the site shall be calculated according to the number of
21 spaces required for each parking facility. *Id.*

22 28. Here, Defendants failed to provide adequate numbers of accessible parking
23 spaces in its facility as there was only one accessible parking space while there were
24 more than 50 regular parking spaces for the parking lots.

25 29. A public accommodation shall maintain in operable working condition those
26 features of facilities and equipment that are required to be readily accessible to and usable
27 by persons with disabilities by the Act or this part. 28 C.F.R. 35.211(a).

1 30. By failing to maintain the facility to be readily accessible and usable by
2 Plaintiff, Defendants are in violation of Plaintiff's rights under the ADA and its related
3 regulations.

4 31. The Business has denied and continues to deny full and equal access to
5 Plaintiff and to other people with disabilities. Plaintiff has been and will continue to be
6 discriminated against due to the lack of accessible facilities, and therefore, seeks
7 injunctive relief to alter facilities to make such facilities readily accessible to and usable
8 by individuals with disabilities.

9 **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

10 **VIOLATION OF THE UNRUH CIVIL RIGHTS ACT**

11 32. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior
12 paragraphs in this complaint.

13 33. California Civil Code § 51 states, "All persons within the jurisdiction of this
14 state are free and equal, and no matter what their sex, race, color, religion, ancestry,
15 national origin, disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sexual
16 orientation, citizenship, primary language, or immigration status are entitled to the full
17 and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business
18 establishments of every kind whatsoever."

19 34. California Civil Code § 52 states, "Whoever denies, aids or incites a denial,
20 or make any discrimination or distinction contrary to Section 51, 51.5, or 51.6, is liable
21 for each and every offense for the actual damages, and any amount that may be
22 determined by a jury, or a court sitting without a jury, up to a maximum of three times the
23 amount of actual damage but in no case less than four thousand dollars (\$4,000) and any
24 attorney's fees that may be determined by the court in addition thereto, suffered by any
25 person denied the rights provided in Section 51, 51.5, or 51.6.

26 35. California Civil Code § 51(f) specifies, "a violation of the right of any
27 individual under federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336)
28 shall also constitute a violation of this section."

1 36. The actions and omissions of Defendants alleged herein constitute a denial
 2 of full and equal accommodation, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services by
 3 physically disabled persons within the meaning of California Civil Code §§ 51 and 52.
 4 Defendants have discriminated against Plaintiff in violation of California Civil Code §§
 5 51 and 52.

6 37. The violations of the Unruh Civil Rights Act caused Plaintiff to experience
 7 difficulty, discomfort, or embarrassment. The Defendants are also liable for statutory
 8 damages as specified in California Civil Code §55.56(a)-(c).

9 **THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION**

10 **VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA DISABLED PERSONS ACT**

11 38. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior
 12 paragraphs in this complaint.

13 39. California Civil Code § 54.1(a) states, “Individuals with disabilities shall be
 14 entitled to full and equal access, as other members of the general public, to
 15 accommodations, advantages, facilities, medical facilities, including hospitals, clinics,
 16 and physicians’ offices, and privileges of all common carriers, airplanes, motor vehicles,
 17 railroad trains, motorbuses, streetcars, boats, or any other public conveyances or modes
 18 of transportation (whether private, public, franchised, licensed, contracted, or otherwise
 19 provided), telephone facilities, adoption agencies, private schools, hotels, loading places,
 20 places of public accommodations, amusement, or resort, and other places in which the
 21 general public is invited, subject only to the conditions and limitations established by
 22 law, or state or federal regulation, and applicable alike to all persons.

23 40. California Civil Code § 54.3(a) states, “Any person or persons, firm or
 24 corporation who denies or interferes with admittance to or enjoyment of public facilities
 25 as specified in Sections 54 and 54.1 or otherwise interferes with the rights of an
 26 individual with a disability under Sections 54, 54.1 and 54.2 is liable for each offense for
 27 the actual damages, and any amount as may be determined by a jury, or a court sitting
 28 without a jury, up to a maximum of three times the amount of actual damages but in no

1 case less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) and any attorney's fees that may be
 2 determined by the court in addition thereto, suffered by any person denied the rights
 3 provided in Section 54, 54.1, and 54.2.

4 41. California Civil Code § 54(d) specifies, "a violation of the right of an
 5 individual under Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336) also
 6 constitute a violation of this section, and nothing in this section shall be construed to limit
 7 the access of any person in violation of that act.

8 42. The actions and omissions of Defendants alleged herein constitute a denial
 9 of full and equal accommodation, advantages, and facilities by physically disabled
 10 persons within the meaning of California Civil Code § 54. Defendants have
 11 discriminated against Plaintiff in violation of California Civil Code § 54.

12 43. The violations of the California Disabled Persons Act caused Plaintiff to
 13 experience difficulty, discomfort, and embarrassment. The Defendants are also liable for
 14 statutory damages as specified in California Civil Code §55.56(a)-(c).

15 **FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

16 **CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE § 19955, et seq.**

17 44. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior
 18 paragraphs in this complaint.

19 45. Plaintiff and other similar physically disabled persons who require the use of
 20 a wheelchair are unable to use public facilities on a "full and equal" basis unless each
 21 such facility is in compliance with the provisions of California Health & Safety Code §
 22 19955 et seq. Plaintiff is a member of the public whose rights are protected by the
 23 provisions of California Health & Safety Code § 19955 et seq.

24 46. The purpose of California Health & Safety Code § 1995 et seq. is to ensure
 25 that public accommodations or facilities constructed in this state with private funds
 26 adhere to the provisions of Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 4450) of Division 5 of
 27 Title 1 of the Government Code. The code relating to such public accommodations also
 28 require that "when sanitary facilities are made available for the public, clients, or

1 employees in these stations, centers, or buildings, they shall be made available for
2 persons with disabilities.

3 47. Title II of the ADA holds as a “general rule” that no individual shall be
4 discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of goods
5 (or use), services, facilities, privileges, and accommodations offered by any person who
6 owns, operates, or leases a place of public accommodation. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(a).
7 Further, each and every violation of the ADA also constitutes a separate and distinct
8 violation of California Civil Code §§ 54(c) and 54.1(d), thus independently justifying an
9 award of damages and injunctive relief pursuant to California law, including but not
10 limited to Civil Code § 54.3 and Business and Professions Code § 17200, et seq.

11 **FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

12 **NEGLIGENCE**

13 48. Plaintiff incorporates by reference each of the allegations in all prior
14 paragraphs in this complaint.

15 49. Defendants have a general duty and a duty under the ADA, Unruh Civil
16 Rights Act and California Disabled Persons Act to provide safe and accessible facilities
17 to the Plaintiff.

18 50. Defendants breached their duty of care by violating the provisions of ADA,
19 Unruh Civil Rights Act and California Disabled Persons Act.

20 51. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants’ negligent conduct, Plaintiff
21 has suffered damages.

22 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

23 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully prays for relief and judgment against
24 Defendants as follows:

25 1. For preliminary and permanent injunction directing Defendants to comply
26 with the Americans with Disability Act and the Unruh Civil Rights Act;

27 2. Award of all appropriate damages, including but not limited to statutory
28 damages, general damages and treble damages in amounts, according to proof;

1 3. Award of all reasonable restitution for Defendants' unfair competition
2 practices;

3 4. Reasonable attorney's fees, litigation expenses, and costs of suit in this
4 action;

5 5. Prejudgment interest pursuant to California Civil Code § 3291; and

6 6. Such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

7 **DEMAND FOR TRIAL BY JURY**

8 Pursuant to Rule 38(b) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Plaintiff hereby
9 demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

10
11 Dated: April 12, 2024

SO. CAL. EQUAL ACCESS GROUP

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14 By: /s/ Jason J. Kim
15 Jason J. Kim, Esq.
16 Attorneys for Plaintiff
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